

SAFETY INFORMATION 06/2021

24th October 2021



ENHANCED SAFETY, TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE IN PREPARATION FOR CIVIL AVIATION INDUSTRY RESTART

Introduction

As Malaysia prepares to enter the endemic phase of COVID-19, the Government of Malaysia has announced the lift of interstate travel restrictions and allows international travel without the MyTravelPass application. With the increase of flight frequency, the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) would like to remind all airline operators to abide to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as published the National Security Council (NSC) and the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) to ensure aviation safety is at the highest level.

Following a prolonged decrease in flight operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's civil aviation industry must be well prepared for the positive restart with more international travel borders reopening soon. In preparation for this, CAAM would like to highlight some important factors that must be actioned by airline operators that includes from top management to the on-ground staff.

Mental Health Checks

The COVID-19 pandemic has badly impacted the livelihood of many in the aviation industry, thus, it is important to ensure the state of mental health of every employee is properly checked and taken care of. Operators should closely monitor the overall health condition of every employee, particularly those in operations, before conducting any flights. Management should acknowledge the importance of carrying out mental health checks on employees by providing a just culture, safe environment, and a platform for staff to speak up. Having more staff engagements and clear communication may further help in identifying any issues and provide the required assistance. The ultimate responsibility to safety lies within every individual and all leaders must step up to lead by example. These are very important key efforts that management must focus on for an effective safety management system in Malaysia.

In carrying out mental health checks, operators may conduct mental health awareness campaign by establishing a support group for employees to open-up, report and seek help. To have a comprehensive risk assessment and mitigation plan, the management must incorporate employee's emotional wellbeing as an input into the safety management system and create a safe zone for employees to voice out their problem. To facilitate a safety culture, a mutual trust and cooperation should be cultivated within the organisation.

In addition to that, airline operators are also encouraged to conduct pre and post flight briefing for flight, cabin, and ground crew. An additional pre-flight checklist directed at air crew's mental

readiness to fly is an effective way to ensure their situational awareness is at the optimum condition. This checklist is a tool to assess the wellbeing of the crew prior to operating a flight. It will comprise questions on the amount of sleep, health status, stress, and amount of physical activities done days before the flying duty. A checklist for the pre-flight mental readiness screening will need to be validated.

Enhanced Training

As the aviation industry increases more capacity, training is the key feature in maintaining currency. Pilots, engineers, cabin crew, air traffic controllers and all ground crew are advised to revisit operation manuals to ensure the required knowledge and information are not forgotten as there will be some form of rustiness as a result from the severe reduction in capacity. The lack of currency will result in skills erosion and slower response time, and this can be mitigated with mental preparation focusing on the technical aspects and catching up with operator manuals.

Operators should provide avenue for those in operations to regain the confidence during pre-pandemic. All license holders must be well rested and mentally and physically ready for duty. In addition to the regulated requirements, enhanced training as mitigation measure may include the following:

- a) Computer Based Training
 - 1) Technical
 - 2) Aircraft system knowledge
 - 3) Procedural knowledge
- b) Crew Resource Management
 - 1) Human Factors
 - 2) Refresh knowledge and skills
 - 3) Increase risk taking attitude
 - 4) Distraction from task
 - 5) Reporting of non-compliance
 - 6) Overcoming fatigue and stress
 - 7) Introduction of Policies and guidance to operate in the current environment
 - 8) Quarantine requirements and effects.
 - 9) Review effective Multi Crew Coordination (MCC)
- c) Simulator Sessions:
 - 1) Regain skills and currency
 - 2) Rebuild confidence in decision making
 - 3) Review of knowledge on recent policies/procedure changes
 - 4) Regain effective MCC procedure and policies

- d) Line training with Flight Instructor:
 - 1) Regain recency as per company policies and regulations
 - 2) Regain recency enroute and line operations procedures
 - 3) Onboard crew rest facilities.
 - 4) Rostering FDP and FTL issues. (Rest Period and Duty Limits)
- e) Line Check with Designated Flight Examiner:
 - 1) Review of validity with regards to Licensing and Regulatory requirements.

Aircraft Maintenance & Assets

The prolonged decrease in flight operations would have resulted to aircraft being in hibernation mode and this also includes ground equipment such as tow trucks, tow bars, ramp vehicles, security scanners and counter machines. For aircraft, maintenance check must be carried out according to required procedures. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure all mandatory checks are carried out diligently with close attention to details and regulatory processes are followed. For all ground equipment, ensure that checks are carried out even if not mandated as this is in the best interest and practices.

- a) Safety Risk Assessment (SRA) required for variations to airworthiness related approvals.

During aircraft return to service (RTS), there may be situations or specific cases that requires operators to make variation(s) to CAAM airworthiness approvals (CAMO, AMO) or deviations from continuing airworthiness and maintenance requirements. As part of CAAM approval consideration process, operators shall submit SRA reports together with other technical justifications. The SRA should consider the condition of the aircraft in their fleet and the organisational aspects. Both CAMO and AMO play an essential role and should work in close coordination to assess and manage the risks by developing control measures and safety strategies to mitigate the associated risks and ensuring a safe RTS of all aircraft.

- b) Targeted surveillance on activation of aircraft from hibernation.

Operators may decide to RTS the aircraft in group or batches to meet their operational needs. As such, operators' CAMO in close coordination with AMO should carry out targeted surveillance on the particular group or batches of aircraft as part of its monitoring of the RTS process and continuing airworthiness of the fleet. Due to prolonged storage/parking, specific inspections may also be required on items relating to contamination of fuel, contamination of air data systems that could lead to unreliable airspeed and altitude indications, lavatory fire extinguishing bottles on in-service aircraft that were parked or stored for prolonged period in a high-temperature environment etc.

Likewise, CAAM will also carry out its own independent targeted surveillance on the operators to ensure effectiveness of operators' RTS activities and processes. This effort is essential to ensure that aircraft returned to service after prolonged storage or parking are in compliance with CAAM requirements and that the aircraft continues to be airworthy i.e., meeting its type design and is in a condition for safe operation.

c) Submission of reliability performance reports by airline operators on monthly basis.

After the aircraft is returned to service (post-RTS) and is in its normal operating environment, operators should submit reliability reports to CAAM on a monthly basis. This will enable both the operators and CAAM to identify and address any airworthiness related discrepancies at an early stage with the aim to achieve better operational performance and minimize disruption to aircraft operation.

As the aviation industry moves towards a safe and sustainable restart, CAAM would like to remind the aviation industry the importance of maintaining high compliance to regulations and civil aviation directives to ensure public safety. CAAM will continue to facilitate and provide the needed support to the industry and wish the industry a safe and secure restart.



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